

Docket No. 0217.97R  
 Amendment dated June 30, 2003  
 Reply to Office Action of March 31, 2003

PATENT

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A composite comprising *Parthenium* species lignocellulosic plant material having naturally occurring resin and synthetic organic polymer plastic, wherein the ratio of plastic to plant material ranges by weight from 80% plastic:20% plant material to 20% plastic:80% plant material.

Claim 2 (original): The composite of claim 1, wherein the *Parthenium* species comprises *Parthenium argentatum*, *Parthenium tomentosum* or *Parthenium incanum*.

Claim 3 (previously amended): The composite of claim 1, wherein the *Parthenium* species plant material comprises (a) whole plant material, (b) plant part material, (c) bagasse, or (d) a combination of (a) - (c).

Claim 4 (previously amended): The composite of claim 1, wherein the *Parthenium* species plant material is processed.

Claim 5 (original): The composite of claim 4, wherein the plant material is processed by a mechanical or chemical reduction process.

Claim 6 (previously amended): The composite of claim 4 wherein the processed *Parthenium* species plant material comprises fibers, fiber bundles, particles, flour, chips, flakes, fines, sawdust, pellets, strands, wafers or combinations thereof.

Claim 7 (original): The composite of claim 1, wherein the plastic is thermoplastic.

Claim 8 (currently amended): The composite of claim 7, wherein the thermoplastic is a synthetic organic polymer comprising acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene; polymer containing acetal groups; nylon, including polyamide; high and low density polyethylene, including co-polymers; polypropylene, including co-polymers; polystyrene; or polymer containing vinyl groups.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The composite of claim 7, wherein the ratio of thermoplastic to plant material ranges by weight from 80% 95% thermoplastic:20% 5% plant material to 30% 5% thermoplastic:70% 95% plant material.

Claim 10 (original): The composite of claim 1, wherein the plastic is thermoset.

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Claim 11 (currently amended): The composite of claim 10, wherein the thermoset is a synthetic organic polymer comprising alkyd; polymer containing allylic groups; polymer containing amino groups, including such as melamine and urea polymers; epoxy; phenolic; polyester; silicone; or urethane.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The composite of claim 10, wherein the ratio of thermoset to plant material ranges by weight from 80% 15% thermoset:20% 85% plant material to 30% 3% thermoset:70% 97% plant material.

Claim 13 (original): The composite of claim 1, wherein the plastic is virgin, recycled, or a combination of both virgin and recycled plastic.

Claim 14 (original): The composite of claim 1, wherein the composite is made by the air-laying, melt-blending or compression molding method.

Claim 15 (original): The composite of claim 1, wherein the composite is particle board or fiberboard.

Claim 16 (previously amended): The composite of claim 1, wherein the *Parthenium* species plant material further comprises (a) lignocellulosic plant material from a plant other than the genus *Parthenium*, (b) added *Parthenium* species natural resin extract or (c) combinations of (a) and (b).

Claim 17 (currently amended): A The composite of claim 1 comprising *Parthenium* species lignocellulosic plant material having naturally occurring resin and synthetic organic polymer plastic, wherein the composite exhibits at least a 30% decrease in termite infestation relative to a composite not containing plant material derived from the genus *Parthenium* as determined by ASTM standard test D-3345.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A The composite of claim 1 comprising *Parthenium* species lignocellulosic plant material having naturally occurring resin and synthetic organic polymer plastic, wherein the composite exhibits a rating of resistant or highly resistant to *Gleophyllum trabeum* or *Poria placenta* decay fungi as determined by ASTM standard test D-2017.

Claim 19 (currently amended): The composite of claim 17 †, wherein the composite further exhibits a termite resistance rating of high or heavy termite mortality as determined by ASTM standard test D-3345.